

Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee and Education & Enforcement Subcommittee

November 21, 2006

Meeting Summary

(DRAFT)

Attendees: Debbie Brown, Delegate Bill Bronrott, Robert Segreti, Bill Frick (full meeting only), Larry Cole, Sue Morris, Debra Snead, Erwin Mack, Hon. Kathy Porter (full meeting only), Linda Katz, Lt. Ron Smith. Staff: Matt Greene, Lisa Rother, Joy Grey-Saunders. Guests: Goldie Rivkin (representing the Commission on Aging), John Wetmore (TV show Perils for Pedestrians).

The evening began with a meeting of the Education and Enforcement Subcommittee at 6:00 and transitioned into the full Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (PSAC) meeting at 7:00. There was a surprisingly good turnout for the Subcommittee meeting and only a couple of people arrived just for the full PSAC meeting.

Key points and follow up items:

1. There will be opportunities soon for the PSAC to testify on proposed changes to the County's Road Code. Matt will assist in the preparations and will update the Committee as soon as possible on the specific opportunities. (See page 5.)
2. It was agreed that a subgroup of the PSAC would work out the specific language for a resolution for continuance of the PSAC beyond its sunset date. The resolution is to include certain requests for more tools or resources that are deemed necessary to ensure a higher level of success for the Committee. (See page 5, item 3.)
3. The PSAC will develop concrete request items as well as a more general message to deliver during upcoming meetings with elected officials. Matt will help organize this effort. It was also suggested that a working group identify 20-30 key people, other than elected officials, to communicate with (See page 6, item 4.)
4. Matt will get in touch with Mr. Knapp and the Upcounty Regional Services Center Director to see about arranging the next Dialogue somewhere in the Upcounty area. (See page 7, item 6.)
5. Volunteer for the December 13 Crossroads event, "Don't kill Santa in the Crossroads." It's scheduled for 12:30 – 3:00 PM. Call Gretchen Hilburger at 301 439-0972 for more info and to sign up.

Education & Enforcement Subcommittee Meeting Summary

Linda began the subcommittee meeting by talking about the inventory of needed improvements in the Silver Spring and Bethesda CBDs that had been put together last year, primarily by Linda, and delivered to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT). A detailed response was provided by DPWT and several items were forwarded to the State Highway Administration (SHA). Linda expressed her view that the follow up to this problem identification list was still insufficient and she noted with deep concern the fatality that had taken place three months earlier at one of the identified intersections – Colesville and East-West Highway.

There was some general conversation concerning the several recent deaths and the fact that two of them, as well as a pedestrian injured only days before, were children. It was noted that the walk training program scheduled for Northwest and Kennedy High Schools was very positive, but everyone agreed that more needed in the way of education for children. It was suggested that the PSAC should communicate with the superintendent and the school board to convey general concerns about pedestrian safety and press for wider adoption of approved K-5 curriculum that was developed in Rockville. This could include personal meetings, much like those sought with Mr. Leggett and Council members.

Erwin Mack brought up the Blair car crash display from last year as an example of an effective attention-getter. Delegate Bronrott noted that the challenge is to sustain that kind of visibility throughout the year. We need events, coupled with enforcement activity, that get media attention. He noted that now is the time to establish new, strong, positive relationships with the Executive and Council and ask for the financial support we need and help from the Public Information Office (PIO) with more media outreach and events. Erwin noted that there is a significant event planned already for the Crossroads area on Dec 13. It's a multi-jurisdictional education and enforcement event involving Montgomery County Police, Prince George's County Police and Takoma Park Police. They are looking for volunteers to hand out literature at this event and he encourages PSAC members to join in.

Lisa explained that she and Matt had put together an estimate for an education / PR campaign for \$400,000. Matt explained that he had talked with Mike Farrell of the Council of Governments (COG) on the Street Smart Campaign costs and the plus and minuses of having our own campaign. The pluses include control over the message and targeting the message the way we want. The drawbacks are the high development costs relative to the market and, if using radio or certain transit advertisements, we'd be paying for messages delivered outside of the County. If we were to do our own campaign it might be advantageous to stick with more print media and events that can be targeted within the County.

Larry said that the Street Smart Campaign is good but asked if there were some way to tie in Street Smart with driver education activities. He's noticed a change for the worse in drivers' behavior the past few months and described it as common for drivers to cut people off in the crosswalks. He suggested publicizing how many tickets are being given out. 5,000 people paid x amount in fines. Need to get that message out to warn drivers and tell them that the law is being enforced and that they could be next.

Linda suggested we work more closely with the Police Department's Office of Public Information. How to communicate to leaders in other government agencies. Should it be staff or staff with a member of the Committee? Lisa said that agencies could be expected to say that they're doing what they can given the resources and that almost everything we talk about goes back to resources. She thinks the Committee has done a good job of putting together a presentation when invited by the executive, but maybe there needs to be a more aggressive pre-meeting or pre-conversation to that meeting, and we're not even sure if the new executive will do the same thing and invite our input each year. If we do get access then we need to have a strong follow up during the budget process.

Delegate Bronrott thinks it's a good idea to enlist the proactive support of the Police and their Public Information Office. It would be helpful if they could come up with a couple or a few things a year to gain media attention. For example, they could issue a report on how many tickets have been written for violating the crosswalk law. These efforts wouldn't have to come out of the

pedestrian safety budget. Matt and Lisa explained the 25K pedestrian safety budget and Street Smart funding going forward. Montgomery County was instrumental in creating the regional Street Smart Campaign in 2002 with help from a state grant. In the past couple of years, our contribution to the Campaign was \$10,000 and came out of the \$25,000 pedestrian safety budget. For fiscal year 2007, with the next campaign scheduled for April 2007, the County is committing its suggested 5c per capita amount of \$40,600.

Larry noted that the Planning Board took a different tack this year with the budget and told the council everything they think they'd need to do the job that the Council wants them to do. He thinks we should do the same thing. The City of Baltimore has police at all the major intersections during rush hour to make sure that pedestrians and drivers are doing the right things. If we're serious, that's what we should do. We've got to get to a point where proper yielding to pedestrians is the norm. There seemed to be general agreement that we should ask for everything we think is necessary.

The issue of construction activity affecting pedestrian traffic came up again. Matt explained the efforts in the summer to address this, including a joint meeting with Department of Permitting Services, DPWT, and Lisa and Matt. It's mainly an enforcement issue and DPWT is organizing a training on this topic. A big hurdle is a shortage of inspectors in DPS and also that Matt and Fred's positions are only funded 50% for pedestrian safety.

Sue explained that she, Mike Flood, and Linda have been meeting to review the Blue Ribbon Panel Report and that that will hopefully provide us with a good foundation for developing our budget requests and general message. She noted that there was nothing in the Report recommendations that made Chief Manger or Art Holmes responsible for implementation. Larry noted that the Report did contain a recommendation to add a performance measure (because everyone is supposed to be working on performance measures) and that is the percentage of roads that are operating at their posted speeds. That was proposed to be a joint performance measure between DPWT and Police and that's not happening.

Sue suggested that if we're going to talk with County leaders we should talk about what we're going to ask. She also expressed concerns about paying into the COG fund and not knowing whether that was making a difference in Montgomery County. If she had to ask Mr. Leggett for something it would be to get his agencies to take responsibility for following the Report recommendations and developing measures of success.

Lisa responded to Delegate Bronrott's earlier question about other jurisdictions' efforts by noting that it may be citizen advocates who make the difference in those places. Maybe we need more grassroots voices weighing in on this – more outrage. Sue said that it's not just the money. This is where the priorities need to be and if this isn't a priority then you're never going to get the money. Larry concurred and noted that the County should adopt the joint performance measure mentioned earlier – percentage of roads operating at their posted speed limits. If speed is a performance measure, the Police will start asking for more money on their own, not the PSAC on their behalf.

Sue said the Report is fabulous and that the Panel members should be proud. However, it's terrible you (the Pedestrian Safety Program) don't have the resources that you need and the Police don't have the resources that they need. She said that if we're talking about what we are doing now that it's five years – that there are some serious issues. And as a marketing person she's not sure it's the \$250,000 for a marketing campaign. There's a bigger picture here.

Delegate Bronrott said that it's amazing that in Rockville and Annapolis that they're dealing with so many issues, but that when you talk with the Montgomery delegation, pedestrian issues are central. He said that in three hours of testimony the night before, 90 percent of it was transportation related, and 90 percent of that was pedestrian safety related. We need more support in Annapolis and here in Rockville. Lisa asked how one organizes that energy into an advocacy organization that can be heard. Sue said that this was something the PSAC should be doing.

Sue asked whether we had to contribute to the COG Street Smart campaign. Lisa said basically yes for this year and explained how Mr. Knapp is the Transportation Planning Board Chair now and that it is a good regional effort. We could decide not to participate later. Sue asked what our \$40,600 gives us in terms of measurable success so we know we should continue it. Lisa said that we didn't know specifically for Montgomery County. Matt noted that the results of the Street Smart Campaign are described in the meeting packet. Most jurisdictions are paying their recommended five cents per capita.

Safe Routes to Schools grant. Matt explained the proposed coordinator role and other program aspects: the coordinator would work with students, parents, staff, PTA, and residents on encouraging walking and biking, mapping out routes and identifying hazards; \$250,000 would go to physical improvements in ten school zones; \$20,000 would contribute to the new speed camera enforcement program near schools. The grant will be awarded shortly for use between 2-07 and 9-08.

Sue said that Arlington is ahead of Montgomery County on many things. Matt offered that Arlington was just in the process of adopting a Complete Streets policy and proceeded to briefly explain what this means.

From completestreets.org:

The streets of our cities and towns ought to be for everyone, whether young or old, motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper. But too many of our streets are designed only for speeding cars, or worse, creeping traffic jams. They're unsafe for people on foot or bike — and unpleasant for everybody.

Now, in communities across the country, a movement is growing to **complete the streets**. States, cities and towns are asking their planners, engineers and designers to build road networks that welcome all citizens.

COMPLETE STREETS are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Sue suggested a visit to Arlington and Delegate Bronrott noted that it's the Arlington Board that makes these things happen. Lisa said that the Council on December 5 will be given a draft update of the Road Code. This is where a complete streets policy could be included. This will be an intense work project for the Council and this is one of the times that citizens could make a big difference. Ms. Floreen had asked for the Road Code to be sent forward. It will go through at least one Council committee before going to back to full Council. Lisa, Matt, and Larry all

reviewed a draft and submitted comments. Matt suggested that the PSAC provide testimony at any future hearing. Lisa said she would investigate future committee assignments.

Discussion next revolved around issues of communicating the pedestrian safety and mobility message to decision makers, that testimony at hearings, letters, calls, and visits from members or other residents or groups is needed. Delegate Bronrott mentioned the three Town Hall meeting opportunities scheduled for the follow week and said he would be going to at least one. Sue said that the main message is that more needs to be done. A suggestion was made to try and gather more interest by reaching out to people through the five Regional Services Centers.

It was noted how many people have pedestrian safety concerns for small geographic areas and this is barrier to organizing for change and also leads to solving problems at this scale. Matt offered up the idea of a pedestrian plan. He noted that the District just set aside \$250,000 to create a pedestrian plan over the next year covering ten major transportation corridors. He also read aloud the Blue Ribbon Panel Report's mission statement: to develop a comprehensive plan (including roles, responsibilities, and funding) to reduce traffic-related crashes, injuries, fatalities, and associated economic costs in a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Full PSAC Meeting Summary

Agenda items:

1. Welcome.
2. Administrative items
3. Continuance of PSAC beyond July 07
4. Communicating with elected leaders
5. Education & Enforcement Subcommittee report
6. Next outreach meeting – when and where.
7. Enforcement update – “must appear” clause
8. Misc. informational items
9. New Business/Citizen Concerns

Item 1: Welcome. The time passed 7:00 at about this point in the discussion and Chairman Frick began following the agenda for the full Committee meeting.

Item 2: Administrative items. The September meeting summary was unanimously approved.

Item 3: Continuance of PSAC beyond July 07. Bill Frick opened discussion on item 3 and spoke of his disappointment at recent fatalities. He said that we can't yet declare victory and that he would not like to see the Committee fold up its tent in the next six months. Larry suggested that we only go forward contingent on getting certain budget items approved. Sue repeated a thought from an earlier part of the discussion and said that it's not only about money, but about having people charged with the responsibility of doing certain jobs, meeting certain levels of success, which is defined by this group and others. Without that, there is no point in our continuing.

Erwin noted that the reason for sunset provisions is to keep ineffective and wasteful committees from continuing. In a letter for reconsideration should be a statement along the lines that Larry's proposing that the group can't be effective beyond what it's been able to do without certain tools, whether it's funding or personnel or what have you. Larry said that our demands ought to include a 100% position for Matt and a 100% position at DPTW. Many concurring remarks were

heard. Erwin made a motion that the sunset law be recognized and that there be a request for continuance conditioned on certain additional tools being given. Some subgroup could come back to the whole group with the actual language for the motion. Erwin's motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Item 4: Communicating with elected leaders. Newly elected officials will be sworn in on December 4. Delegate Bronrott would like to meet with the elected leadership and let them know we're here, to ask for general support as well as ask for specific items. Twice in recent weeks Mr. Leggett has expressed his interest in working on pedestrian issues. The Committee will talk via email to develop a list of requests.

Linda noted that during the Subcommittee meeting members talked about meeting with the schools superintendent, school board, and agency heads. She suggested forming a small working group to identify the top 20-30 people we should outreach to aside from elected officials. Bill Frick concurred that this is a good idea.

Erwin said that there was a great example in district two in Prince George's County of coming up with bilingual materials, including bus advertisements. We should look to their example of people coming together. Some discussion of their only operating in PG and what dept in UM is working on this. He'll get more background on this from the UM to give to Matt to pass along to the committee. Domestic violence materials and campaign are crossing the county line now and working with the crossroads group.

Bill Frick asked John Wetmore about his experiences in advocacy and the Committee identified some of difficulties in organizing people around pedestrian issues. Pedestrians are segmented and care about the small areas compared with bikers or drivers. And many recreational walkers don't see the transportation aspect. Sue noted many previous campaigns for public programs, such as I-270 and affordable housing were aided by organized business interests. There doesn't seem to be an organized transit riders' coalition, but it seems like when fare increases are proposed that there are a number of organizations that appear on their behalf. Perhaps those groups could become engaged and focused on the safety issue of transit riders being pedestrians also.

Erwin noted that Crossroads represents 158 businesses. It can be done. They're getting a 15 million dollar facility (the new transit center) as a result. Business associations should be pulled into this and support matters of concern to us.

Linda said that for the last 25 years, the County has been talking about livable communities. Bethesda, Silver Spring, Rockville are supposed to be places where you can work, live, and walk. There's a natural tie in to the business community. General agreement was noted on that and that getting organized was imperative. John suggested going to americawalks.org to check out places with successful advocacy groups and find out more. Sometimes it has involved people protesting, in the crosswalks for example, to get news crews out there and get some attention.

Item 5: Education & Enforcement Subcommittee report. Linda and Matt both helped to recap the discussion from earlier. The bottom line is we're not getting everything we want. We want more success.

Delegate Bronrott noted that the pre-Halloween media event didn't get very good media attention. He asked for ideas for upcoming events and also asked about the speed camera

program and whether that would provide an opportunity for publicity. Lt. Smith explained that a vendor was chosen, but there was not a fixed start date yet. The program will employ just under 30 new people - 12 field technicians, program managers, administrative staff, and analysts to identify deployment locations. The Police are working closely with DPWT on this and will share a central data server. Municipalities, including Gaithersburg, Rockville, and Chevy Chase, will run their own programs. Substantial money will go into the awareness portion of this program. They're using the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) community speed control program as a model. The cornerstone of that is data collection to know where you need to be, and a substantial public awareness and education component. It's not a revenue generating program – the ideal situation is where we have massive voluntary compliance and this program goes away on its own. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety will conduct a study to validate the findings and compare the program here with one being run in Fairfax County. Revenues will go to public safety, but the details are not worked out.

Item 6: Next outreach meeting (Dialogue). Bill Frick noted the success of the Friendship Heights Dialogue held September 25. It was decided that we should not wait for any invites and that we should get in touch with Mr. Knapp and the Upcounty Regional Services Center Director to see about arranging the next Dialogue somewhere in the Upcounty area.

Item 7: Enforcement update – “must appear” clause. Changes in the law took place recently which took away the requirement for officers to appear in court in order to prosecute crosswalk violations by drivers. The intent was to make it easier for officers to issue these citations. The Committee was interested in knowing what effect this has had. Ron explained some of the difficulties in trying to conduct research with the database of violations. At this point he was unable to draw any solid conclusions about the law's affect on ticket writing based on the data. However, anecdotally, it seems that the law change has had the intended effect and that officers do seem more willing to issue citations for crosswalk violations. Then he shared some details from the collision reports for the last four fatal collisions.

8. Misc. informational items. None or discussed with other agenda items.

9. New Business/Citizen Concerns. John Wetmore informed us that several more episodes of Perils for Pedestrians had been posted to Google video, including one in which a wheelchair user and a blind pedestrian share their experiences.